

Appl. No.: 10/759,630
Reply to Office Action of: April 18, 2005

Remarks

Specification

The Examiner has objected to the disclosure because of informalities on page 10, line 17. Accordingly, the call out number for the mating connector has been amended as suggested by the Examiner.

The Title of the invention has been objected to by the Examiner as being not descriptive. A new title which is indicative of the invention is hereby submitted.

In addition, several typographical errors noted in review of the application have been corrected through amendments to the specification. No new matter has been added.

Claims 11 and 17-24 are pending in the application. Claims 11 and 17-24 stand rejected.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 11 and 17-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being incomplete for omitting essential elements. The Examiner indicated that since claims 11 and 17-24 do not recite the flexible printed circuit board, the limitations such as contact openings recited in claim 19 and the receiving space recited in claim 20 are unclear. Also, the Examiner indicated that it is unclear how the two part plates form a connector when the claims only recite the structure of two part plates without any contacts.

In these claims, the Applicants do not seek to claim a connector but instead seek to claim simply a continuous ribbon which advantageously provides a pre-product for the manufacture of a connector (see application page 10, line 1). In order to clarify, claims 17-22 have been amended to more clearly recite that the part plates form a pre-product for the manufacture of a connector. Contacts are not a required element of the pre-product and therefore have not been added to the claims. Also, contact openings recited in claim 19 and the receiving space recited in

Appl. No.: 10/759,630
Reply to Office Action of: April 18, 2005

claim 20 are clearly structural elements of the part plates which form the continuous ribbon as described in the specification and clearly shown in the drawings. Considering these amendments and remarks, Applicants contend that claims 11 and 17-24 include essential elements meeting the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Reconsideration and removal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 11, 17-20, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Narozny (U.S. Patent No. 4,067,637) in view of Deverrewaere (U.S. Patent No. 4,193,659). The Examiner contends that Narozny discloses the elements of claim 11 except for the two part plates of the ribbon being mutually connected by an integral flexible connecting piece. Instead, as the Examiner correctly points out, the two part plates of Narozny are latched to each other without an integral flexible connecting piece. The Examiner then relies upon Deverrewaere for a disclosure of the integral flexible connecting piece.

Claim 11 has been amended to recite that the integral flexible connecting piece extends continuously along a leading edge of the continuous part plates. This recitation in combination with the other claim elements is distinguishable from the teachings of Deverrewaere since the hinge of Deverrewaere is constituted by two thin plates, 56 and 58 which do not extend continuously across the leading edge but instead are separated by the opening 57. Since Narozny does not teach nor suggest the integral flexible connecting piece and since Deverrewaere does not teach nor suggest that the integral flexible connecting piece extends continuously along a leading edge of the continuous part plates, the rejection 35 U.S.C. § 103 of claim 11 and those that depend therefrom under is respectfully overcome. Reconsideration is therefore respectfully requested.

Appl. No.: 10/759,630
Reply to Office Action of: April 18, 2005

Claims 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Narozny and Deverrewaere as applied to claims 11, 17-20, and 23, and further in view of Strate (U.S. Patent No. 4,831,892). Since the rejection of claim 11 under the combination of Narozny and Deverrewaere has been overcome as discussed above, the addition of Strate does not teach nor suggest the required elements of amended claim 11 from which claims 21 and 22 depend. Therefore, the rejections of claims 21 and 22 is also respectfully overcome and reconsideration is requested.

Similarly, claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Narozny and Deverrewaere as applied to claims 11, 17-20, and 23, and further in view of Ortega, et al., (U.S. Patent No. 5,830,012). For the same reasons recited above regarding claims 21 and 22, the rejection of claim 24 is also respectfully overcome since a combination of Narozny and Deverrewaere do not render amended claim 11 obvious. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

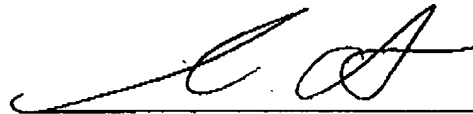
Appl. No.: 10/759,630
Reply to Office Action of: April 18, 2005

Conclusion

In view of the amendments and arguments presented herein, the application is considered to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and passage to issue is respectfully requested.

Please charge any additional fees and/or credit any overpayments associated with this application to Deposit Order Account No. 501581.

Respectfully submitted,



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